

# GULFPORT AT A *GLANCE*

Where city employees get their news



## Mayor's Note

### *A Word of Appreciation to City Employees*

Thanks to the hard work, leadership and dedication of nearly all of our city employees, in only 14 months the deficit in Gulfport has been erased in our 2011 budget adopted by the City Council last month.

And, with very few exceptions, each one of our employees who have remained committed and who sincerely wants to work, still thankfully has a job.

Fourteen months ago, City of Gulfport expenditures exceeded city receipts by more than \$9 million. No city, business, family or individual can remain solvent while continuing to spend more than is taken in.

Some of the temporary adjustments we have had to make in recent months have been painful to Gulfport citizens and to city employees. But while these changes were difficult, they also were necessary.

Just a few short years ago the government of Orange County, California, filed for bankruptcy. City services came to a sudden halt. Thousands of employees lost their jobs. Entire departments were eliminated, and salaries for those remaining employees were sliced in half or more.

At the time, the Orange County bankruptcy was the largest of any local government in American history, but since then others have followed and more are sliding closer to the edge. For example, Jefferson County, Ala. (Birmingham), is on the brink of what would become the largest government bankruptcy in U.S. history. At least 39 states expect a budget shortfall in 2011 with the tab estimated at more than \$180 billion.

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2010

CityNews



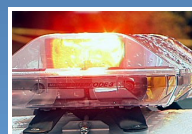
**Benefits Buzz: 3**  
What's new with Benefits



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City Council and Clerks



**5 Questions: 5**  
Rusty Walker answers your questions



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Clerks become certified



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Allowing the City of Gulfport to become another financial casualty was simply not an option. Cutting costs while preventing widespread layoffs and salary cuts became a top priority.

To achieve this goal, changes had to be made. Paying police and fire double-time on holidays was reduced to time-and-a-half. Built-in, automatic overtime was eliminated. Community centers with less than three hours of activity per week are no longer opened full-time. City employees began paying a part of the cost of take-home vehicles to residences outside of the city in places such as Pearl River, Stone, Jackson, Hancock and Forrest counties.

We are proud to say the reductions, for the most part, were made without serious interruption of city services.

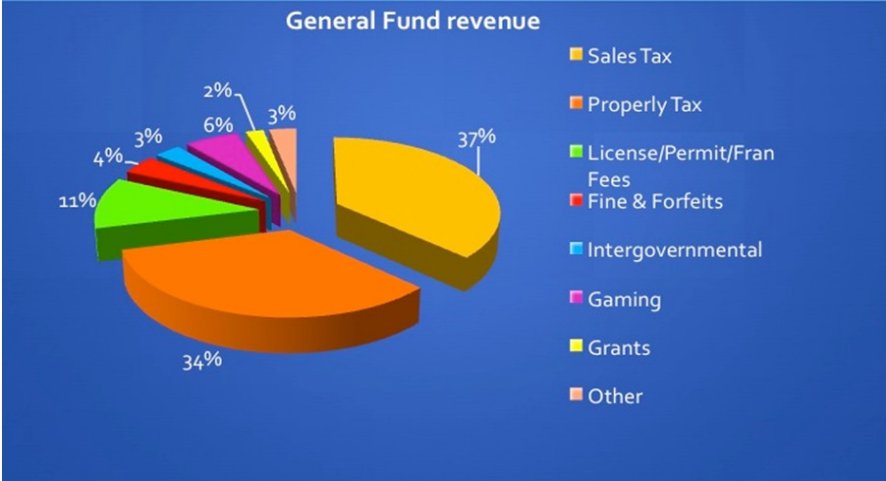
The reduction in staff, with very few exceptions, was done through attrition — when a city employee retired or resigned, their position was eliminated or reallocated. Where employee safety was an issue, extra steps to give our staff reasonable and healthy working conditions became a top priority.

These graphs show the channels of city funds, where the money comes from and where it goes.

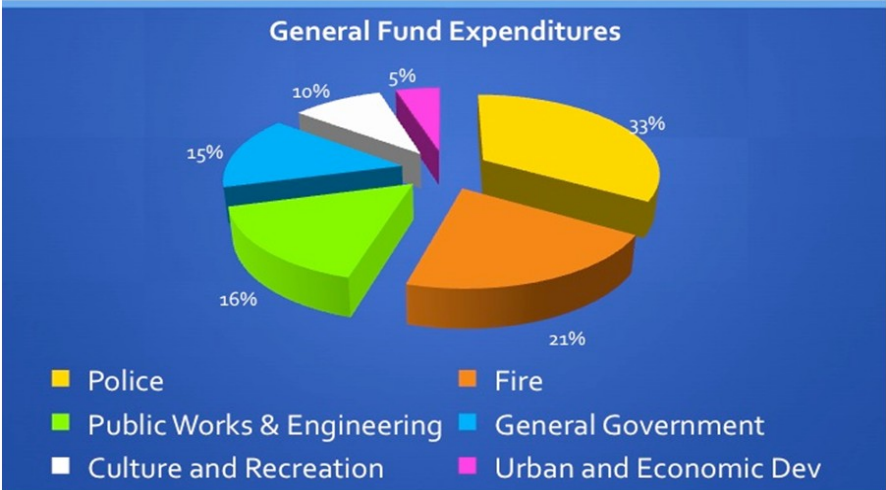
Because of the worst recession since the Great Depression, city revenue from sales tax — which makes up nearly 37 percent of city revenue — has fallen. Property tax, which totals 34 percent of city income, is not growing because construction is down during the recession.

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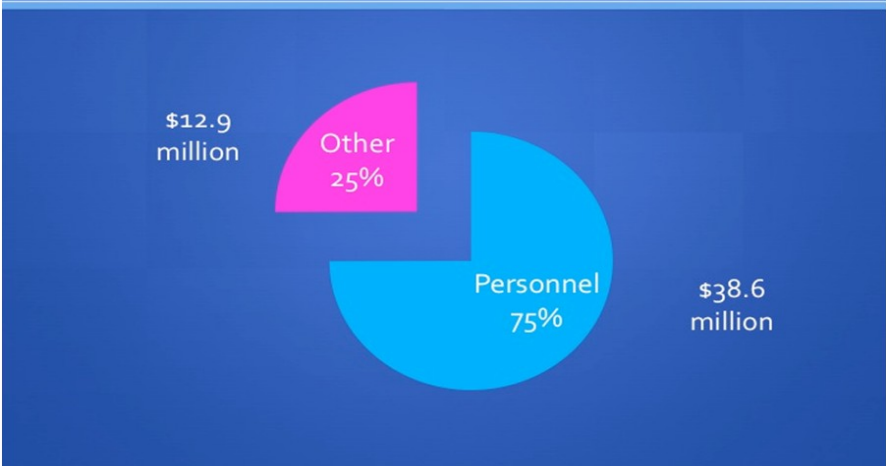
## Where the money comes from...



## And where does it go...



## General Fund Cost Breakdown



Of every dollar the city spends, 75 cents goes to pay employee salaries and benefits. The remaining 25 cents paves our roads, operates our water and sewerage systems, picks up our trash, covers fuel and utility expenses, purchases and maintains our buildings and equipment, cuts the grass, operates street lights, cell phones and computers, buys paper and office supplies, operates community centers, ball fields, playgrounds and cemeteries, pays legal and professional expenses, trains and educates our employees, maintains our Employee Health Clinic, and much more.

To those city employees who have made suggestions on ways to reduce expenses and to those who have taken-up the slack because of temporary vacancies, sickness, vacations, military leave and other absences, we express our deepest gratitude. Your work and commitment has not gone unnoticed.

Through the leadership of city directors and department heads specific adjustments will continue to be made to increase operating efficiency. With salary and benefits making up 75 percent of city operating cost, an employee's time away from the job for any reason must be carefully managed.

Excessive absenteeism, especially under the current circumstances, can simply not be tolerated. A full day's work for a full day's pay must be the standard.

While a continuation of managing operating expenses will be maintained, we cannot balance the budget by saving paper clips and rubber bands. Our people cost are our driving costs. Working smarter is our path to success.

Thank you again for everything you are doing to steer our city to greatness.

George Schloegel  
Mayor

*"To those city employees who have made suggestions on ways to reduce expenses and to those who have taken-up the slack because of temporary vacancies, sickness, military leave and other absences, we express our deepest gratitude. Your work and commitment has not gone unnoticed."*

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## Benefits Buzz

By Lynn Hill

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It's the time of the year for our annual open enrollment period. Typically, there are only select times when employees are able to make changes on or cancel our insurance plans – and only in certain situations including marriage, divorce, birth, death, adoption, or loss of coverage. Open enrollment is the time when employees can make changes to their insurance coverage and pre-tax spending accounts. You can change medical or dental options, cancel or add coverage, and add or remove dependents for any reason.

Open enrollment will be held during the month of November. Although there are no changes to our insurance coverage or premiums, meetings will be scheduled for employees who have questions about our plans or enrollment. Meetings will be held from November 1<sup>st</sup> through November 12<sup>th</sup> at different locations throughout the City - times and locations will be announced later this month.

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## Benefits Buzz

Although these meetings are not mandatory, it's important to know that if you wish to continue insurance benefits, you **must re-enroll and confirm** your elections online at [HR Connection](#). The Sawyer Foster team will provide laptops during enrollment meetings to assist employees who do not have access to a computer.

If you have misplaced your user name or password for HR Connection, contact [Lynn Hill](#) by email for *before* **October 30<sup>th</sup>** to be prepared for open enrollment.

If you currently have a pre-tax Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and wish to keep your account open for 2011 you must re-enroll and elect the Medical or Dependent Care FSA option in [HR Connection](#). Both FSA's require you to estimate an amount you intend to spend during the plan year. The maximum amount you can contribute to the Medical FSA is \$3000 and the Dependent Care is \$5000.

Dependent care is paid out of pocket, then an expense claim is filed with SAS to be reimbursed from the FSA.

If you currently have a Benny card, **keep your card, DO NOT THROW IT AWAY**. Your new FSA medical amount for 2011 will be posted to your card. If you currently did not elect FSA for 2010 and wish to participate for 2011, a card will be mailed to you. If you wish to cancel your FSA, simply do not enroll for 2011 and your account will be closed. You must re-enroll in FSA every year.

Due to the new Healthcare Reform Act, employees can enroll legal dependents up to the age of 26 on your medical coverage. This must be your legal dependent by birth, adoption, or guardianship and you must provide a certified copy of a birth certificate to the Human Resources office. Please put your name and employee number on the copy. This legal dependent does not have to live with you, he/she can be married or unmarried, employed or unemployed, and he/she is no longer required to be a full time student.

Any changes made during open enrollment will be effective for January 1, 2011.

## In the Spotlight: City Council – The Public's Voice

by Lauren Germany

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In July 2010, the new City Council was elected and installed. With the Council leading the charge, many changes have taken place since then, but all in all, their fundamental roles remain the same throughout the years.



(L-R) Kathy Johnson and Ronda Cole

City Council is the legislative branch of City government. It carries out duties in accordance with Mississippi Code of 1972 (The Code) and is primarily responsible for making laws which govern the City of Gulfport. City Council proposes, debates, and votes on legislation governing and/or affecting the city; approves appointments as provided by The Code; regulates revenues and expenditures, incurs debt, and approves the final operating budget for the City. Council is also responsible for the introduction of legislation generated by the administrative branch of city government.

Gulfport's City Council is composed of seven members with each member representing a council ward and acts on behalf of the citizens and businesses of his/her ward. Council members are elected by a majority vote by the residents of their ward and serve a four year term.

Supporting the administrative functions of the Council Members are **Kathy Johnson**, Council Clerk; and **Ronda Cole**, Deputy Council Clerk.

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"The Council office is typically where citizens call or stop by when they have questions or issues with any city services. We do our best to assist in answering their questions or getting them to the right department that can service their needs" says **Ronda**. "Working for the City Council is a new and exciting challenge every day. With seven different bosses, it is imperative to be able to multi-task with assisting the individual needs of the Council while still managing the day-to-day duties of the office. At the end of the day we are all public servants and if I've made life a little easier for someone, and they're thankful for that, that is the highest compliment that can be paid and where I get my satisfaction. "

## 5 QUESTIONS: Rusty Walker, Vice Council President



**1: As a business owner in Gulfport, has your business been hurt by the economy?**

Our business has taken about a 35% hit in the last two years. We have laid off personnel and the remaining staff has taken pay cuts. We no longer provide health insurance to employees.

**2: Has the dynamic of the Council changed since the taking of-fice over a year ago? If so, how?**

I believe we are all just now getting used to working with each other. Working as a group is always a challenge but I think you see that we've been able to get over some pretty major hurdles already. While the administration and the council often have differences, we are usually able to come to a compromise that works without fighting or bickering. But just because there is no fighting doesn't make it easy!

**3: What made you decide to run for Council?**

Working in contracting and procurement on the outside world, I saw ways I thought I could help make things more efficient and provide a better quality of life for everyone in the City.

**4: What has been your biggest accomplishment for your district?**

I've been very clear that there is one Gulfport and I will make decisions that are good for Gulfport as a whole while advocating for my ward. Most of the victories in my ward are for individuals with problems ranging from overgrown ditches to neighbors with derelict property. While these may seem very small things in the scheme of a city, they are very big deals to those people we help. The tax abatement ordinance JUST passed this last week is a pretty big deal legislative-wise. We hope that we are able to see it be a stimulus to development and if so, roll it out in other limited areas.

**5: What is your economic outlook for our City?**

We are really getting some serious interest from businesses wanting to relocate to our renovated harbor and surrounding area. I think the harbor investment along with continued entertainment and events in downtown will help grow Gulfport's already diverse economy. We still need revitalization projects for Pass Road, 19th St, Dedeaux, and many other areas in Gulfport due to the functional obsolescence of most of the structures in those areas.

*"I think the harbor investment along with continued entertainment and events in downtown will help grow Gulfport's already diverse economy. "*

*- Councilman  
Rusty Walker*

LIGHTS & SIRENS: Fire & Police News  
POLICE DEPARTMENT

by Mike Saucier

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## Civilian Employees of the Month

**Pam Winston** (*pictured first*) was recognized as Civilian Employee for May. During her 20 years of service, she has spent most of that time as the Assistant Grant Coordinator. Her co-workers say that she manages multiple projects that require strict attention to detail; her meticulous attention to that detail ensures the City of Gulfport reimbursement for every penny expended in implementation of the department's grants; and she is a team player and is the first to assist other employees with projects and fill in when they are absent.

**Cassie Necaise** (*pictured third*) was recognized as Civilian Employee of the Month in July. A 12 year Dispatcher in the Communications Division, **Cassie** is recognized for handling an extremely high pressure job with a positive attitude on a day to day basis. Her co-workers describe her as always willing to help others with any problems that come up, without delay or complaint.

**Tritter Hinson** (*pictured second*) was named Civilian Employee of the Month for June. A 17 year employee, **Tritter** serves as the Administrative Assistant to the Operations Bureau. Without hesitation she has been a force multiplier who displays an unselfish behavior in her willingness to help other employees succeed with their assignments. She never complains about the task assigned to her and is always willing to take on more duties to ensure the mission is completed.

Community Service Technicians **Roy Culpepper** (*pictured fourth*) and **Lon Booker** (*pictured fifth*) were recognized as joint employees of the month for August. **Roy** has been with the police department for nine years and **Lon** for three. They are credited with distributing over 30,000 "Lock your door stickers" on vehicles throughout the city since January. Both of them have taken ownership in this effort to reduce the amount of car burglaries in Gulfport. The key to crime reduction is crime prevention. **Roy** and **Lon** have taken this philosophy to heart, and have undoubtedly provided an important benefit to the citizens of Gulfport.





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**LIGHTS & SIRENS: Fire & Police News**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**Fire Station 7—A New Beginning**

If the walls of Fire Station 7 could talk, they would likely tell us stories about breathtaking sunrises on the waters of the Gulf of Mexico; about dutiful Fire Fighters having Thanksgiving dinner under her roof; and about being swallowed by Katrina's tidal surge on August 29, 2005. When the waters started to rise, the crew took their trucks and moved to a local school to ride out the storm.



Since then, the site has served as an ever-present reminder of the hurricane and the 12 staff members stationed there have been managing their operations in the cramped quarters of a trailer.

Although the future of the Station 7 faced much uncertainty over the past year, construction on the new \$2 million facility is underway and is expected to be complete by April 2011.



Station 7 is located on the corner of Cowan Road and Highway 90. The building destroyed by Katrina was constructed in 1999.

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## Downtown is Cruisin'

Gulfport kicked off Cruisin' the Coast 2010 with our day-long Fall Around Town festival. Co-hosting with the Gulfport Chamber of Commerce, the event allowed the City to showcase our newly revitalized downtown.

This year the first Cruisin' the Coast event was held in conjunction with Fall around Town and included local artists selling their crafts in Lighthouse Park. Over 4000 visitors enjoyed live entertainment, food and drinks from local restaurants, shopped local produce and baked treats from the farmer's market; and voted for Gulfport's "Best Bloody Mary"; and saw this year's first peek at nearly 1000 Cruisers.

Downtown Gulfport is becoming a hotspot for nightlife and dining. These are two features we are proud to have on display for the thousands of locals and tourists visiting our area.



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## Cream of the Crop at the Court

by Jennifer Jones Snaer

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On June 28, 2010, Gulfport Municipal Court Deputy Court Clerks did something that no one else in the state of Mississippi can say they've done. They became the *first* and *only* court to have all Deputy Court Clerks certified to handle initial appearances.

When a Clerk is certified to handle initial appearances, it gives them the ability to accept a defendant's plea when a municipal judge is unavailable.

During the Court Clerks Conference, the Clerks completed classes given by the Mississippi Judicial College of the University of Mississippi to receive their certification.

On September 1, Mayor Schloegel and C.A.O., Dr. Kelly, presented all 16 clerks with their certificates. Several clerks were also recognized for their hard work and diligence in our most recent scanning project. The Municipal Court now has over 90,000 digital court records.

Congratulations to the following clerks who received their certification: **Christal Adams, Colby Combs, Sabrena Davis, Tera Hall, Kimberly Isa-bell, Anita Jones, Cristie King, Heather McCarty, Brenda McKay, Tamara Mills, Chandra Moore, Quiana Purdy, Valeria Seldon-Ray, Sharon Spiers, Belinda Thomas, Anna Vu.**



With Mayor Schloegel: Tera Hall (pictured first); Chandra Moore (second); Anita Jones (third); Valeria Seldon-Ray (fourth); Colby Combs & Quiana Purdy (at left)



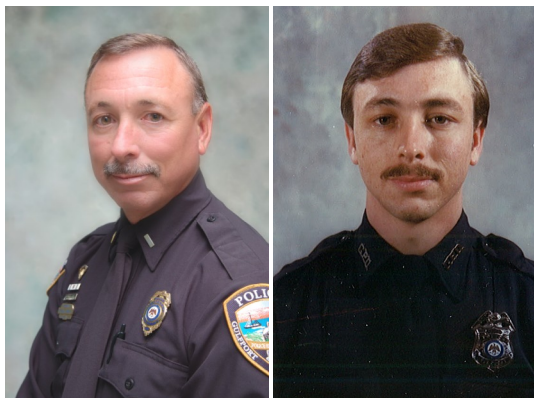
## Retirees:

**Thank you for Your Service, Dedication, and  
for Sharing Your Experience With Us...  
Best Wishes !**

### Brian K. Smith

Lieutenant **Brian K. Smith** (pictured at right) retired with 24 years of service with the Police Department. **Brian** was an icon of the department and there is not a single officer who he has not influenced in some shape form or fashion. Any major city function that required police assistance since 2002, was most likely orchestrated by **Brian**. His service to the city is only overshadowed by his contributions to his fellow employees, who will miss his wisdom and leadership.

**Brian** plans on continuing to serve the city as a volunteer in the police department chaplaincy program.



### Joseph O. Ing

Deputy Fire Marshal **Joseph O. Ing**, retired after 29 years of dedicated service to the Fire Department.

He was hired in as a Fire Fighter in 1981 and has been an asset to the fire department since.

During his time as Fire Marshall, he worked diligently on investigating structure fires and proved many cases of arson throughout the city over his years of service.

## COMING IN DECEMBER

### 5 Questions:



Traffic Superintendent **Rodney Ladner** will take your questions in the December edition.

To submit a question for **Rodney** to answer in the next issue, send via email to: [lgermany@gulfport-ms.gov](mailto:lgermany@gulfport-ms.gov)

Submissions must be received by November 1.

### Santa in The Park:

Bayou View Park will soon be aglow with the sights and sounds of Christmas...including a visit from Old Saint Nick!

Find out what happens behind the scenes to make this a special event for the families of Gulfport.

**Get involved with Glance...**Click on our links to send us your news, announcements, and pictures for our next newsletter:

- Fire Department: [Donna Ladner](#), [Natasha Tate](#)
- General Administration: [Bill Fulks](#), [Lauren Germany](#), [Lynn Hill](#), [Ryan LaFontaine](#)
- Leisure Services: [Kerri Jones](#)
- Municipal Court: [Colby Combs](#), [Jennifer Jones Snaer](#)
- Police: [Mike Saucier](#)
- Public Works: [Mona Ervin](#)
- Urban Development: [Nett Alexander](#), [Isaac Williams](#)

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# Anniversary Milestones

## 20 YEARS

Will Platts, Police Department

## 10 YEARS

Stephenie Bley, Police Department

Joey McCorkle, Fire Department

Mark Peduzzi, Police Department

John Tillis, Leisure Services

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## New Hires

Melissa Hinley, Dispatcher, Police Department

Mario Hill, Patrol Officer, Police Department

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## Promotions

Joshua Broman, Patrol Officer 2, Police Department

Brittany Dyess, Program Coordinator, Leisure Services

Clint Fore, Patrol Officer 2, Police Department

Joseph Garrett, Patrol Officer 2, Police Department

Julius Payne, Center Coordinator, Leisure Services

John Tillis, Center Coordinator, Leisure Services

## Tailgating Recipes from our Gridiron Gourmets

### **CALICO BEANS** by Deana Norton—Police Dept.

10 to 12 slices bacon (crumbled)	1 can lima beans or butter beans, drained
1 lb. lean ground beef	1 can kidney beans, drained
1 c. chopped onion	1/2 c. ketchup
1/2 c. brown sugar	1 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. dry mustard	1 tbsp. vinegar
2 cans pork and beans	

Brown bacon, ground beef, and chop onions. Combine drained ground beef mixture in slow cooker with remaining ingredients; cover and cook on stove top on low for 2-3 hours or in your slow cooker on low for 2-3 hours.

### **VIKING FAN SWEEDISH MEATBALLS** by Colby Combs – Municipal Court

1 lb ground beef	1/2 cup flour
1 lb pork sausage	2 tablespoons bacon fat
5 slices white bread crusts removed	2 tablespoons Mazola oil
1 c. milk	3 cups chicken broth
2 eggs	1/2 cup half & half
2 tablespoons chopped dill	2 tablespoons orange marmalade
1 teaspoon black pepper	2 tablespoons cranberry sauce

Process bread into crumbs in a food processor. Combine ground beef and sausage. Mix with bread crumbs, milk, eggs, dill, and pepper. Form in 1 tablespoon balls. Dredge in flour. In a large skillet, melt bacon fat combined with Mazola over medium-high heat. Brown meatballs on all sides and transfer to a 13x9 baking dish. In the skillet, combine chicken broth, half & half, marmalade, and cranberry sauce. Whisk until smooth. Reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes or until sauce thickens. Pour into baking dish with meatballs. Bake at 400 degrees 30 minutes

### **RAGIN' CAJUN JAMBAYLA** by Lauren Germany – Human Resources

1 lb shrimp, cooked	1 stalk celery, chopped
1 lb. boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1 in cubes	1 c. chicken broth
1/2 lb sausage, sliced	2 tsp. oregano
1 can diced tomatoes	2 tsp Cajun seasoning
1 med. onion	1 tsp hot sauce
1 green bell pepper, seeded & chopped	2 c. cooked rice
1/2 tsp thyme	2 bay leaves

In a slow cooker, combine chicken, sausage, tomatoes, onion, green pepper, celery, and chicken broth. Stir in oregano, Cajun seasoning, hot sauce, bay leaves, and thyme. Cover, and cook on LOW for 7 hours or on HIGH for 3 hours. Stir in the thawed shrimp, cover and cook until the shrimp is heated through, about 5 minutes. Discard bay leaves and spoon mixture over cooked rice.

### **COUNTRY RIBS** by Keith Walker – Police Dept.

Baste ribs in mayonnaise and sprinkle with Greek Seasoning. Slow cook over a bed of charcoal and soaked pecan for around 3 hours. (The mayo forms a seal around the ribs which keeps them very moist)

## Say WHAT???

Each department has their own language...acronyms, phrases, and abbreviations that may confuse the rest of us. But the next time you hear one of these words, you'll know what they mean:

**NIMS:** National Incident Management System, a system of standardized procedures that all levels of government use to conduct emergency responses

**BUA—Finance:** Budget Amendment

**Req.** (pronounced "wreck") - **Human Resources:** a requisition form to replace a terminated employee

**ACH— Payroll:** Automatic Clearing House, or government the system that supports electronic funds transfer

**Signal 1—Police:** The code for a vehicle accident

**10/8—Police:** The code an officer uses when he is available or in service

**F.I.—Police:** Field Interview



## Announcements

# UNITED WAY

The City of Gulfport is participating in the United Way of South Mississippi's 2010 annual campaign this year, with our campaign running through the end of November 2010. United Way of South Mississippi helps citizens in Hancock, Harrison and Pearl River Counties and expended over \$1 million dollars in our communities, last year. To help those in need, complete and return a payroll pledge card by November 30th.

Contact your department coordinator for a payroll pledge card



For more information about the United Way of South Mississippi, click [here](#) to visit their web page.

## Fall Festivities

The Leisure Services Department will hold its annual Fall Festival at Goldin Park on October 26th and Trick-or-Treat Down 14th Street on October 28th. Both events will be from 5:30-8:30 and will include music, refreshments, prizes, and costume contests.

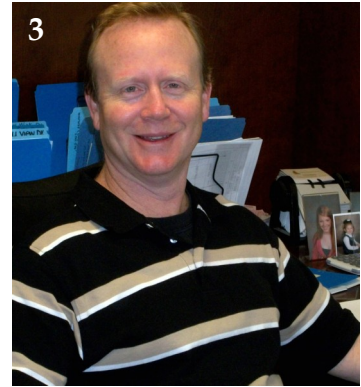
For more information, contact **Kerri Jones** at 868.5881.



On August 16th, Engineer **Brandon Dearman** welcomed Kelsie Breanna. Congratulations to the Dearman family

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# The Last Glance...



1. Leslee Curry – Police Dept
2. Liz MacMillan & Bruce Griebel – Leisure Services
3. Gary Anderson, Urban Development
4. Monica Johnson – Police Dept
5. Rob Enochs – Police Dept
6. Steve Dodge, Richard Thorsten, Doug Hicks & John Ladner - Public Works
7. Debra Williams – Police Dept
8. Reggie Sims – Leisure Services & Ryan Merrill – Information Systems

